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ABSTRACT

This report focuses on guidance and counseling training of guidance practitioners in Botswana. The introduction notes that currently in Botswana many schools have a guidance teacher and/or volunteer for the position who is, more likely, to be chosen by the headmaster. The status of counselor training is examined. The roles and functions which should be contained in a comprehensive and systematic program of preservice and inservice training are discussed. These include: program development; counseling; pupil appraisal; educational and occupational planning; referral; placement; parent help; staff consulting; research; and public relations. Core skills important in the training of the teacher-counselor are examined. A cooperative approach for maximizing limited resources is suggested. The capacity of the guidance and counseling unit is discussed. A phased development is recommended that would begin with the selection and training of four Regional Guidance Officers. Administrative location of the counseling and guidance unit is discussed. It is noted that the development of a career information system is critical to a successful guidance program. A section on career ladders claims that with the development of two new professional tracks, teacher-counselors and teacher-advisors, it is an auspicious time to consider a career ladder for each of these positions. (ABL)

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BOTSWANA

Junior Secondary Education Improvement Project

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
Training of Guidance Practitioners

August 1990

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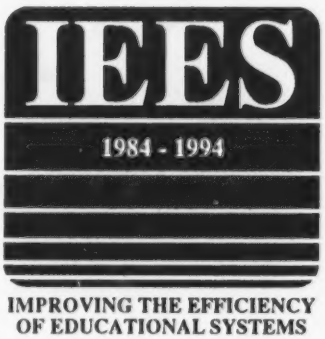

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GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING TRAINING OF GUIDANCE PRACTITIONERS

Stephen A. Rollin

INTRODUCTION

One of the hallmarks of every profession is its commitment to continuing education or staff development. In a rapidly changing world featuring exciting and challenging new developments in knowledge and skills it is critical that professionals be exposed to and develop competencies in these new areas. The acquisition of new skills and knowledge will allow the counsellor professional to meet the needs of their clients.

Many professional entities require the attainment of a specific number of in-service 'credits' to continue to practice their profession. This continuing education requirement reflects the contract between the profession and society to provide the highest level of service. This implied contract is true for all professions: teaching, counselling, medicine, law, and so forth. To be unable to provide a strong and viable program of continuing education is to break the contract to make the best service available and, thus, violate the trust of those whom we serve. With this philosophy as a guide the following model was developed.

Guidance is a service and is unique in the education system. The service that is provided is assisting teachers, students and parents to navigate the educational waters. This report is written with this unique notion of counsellors as navigators in mind.

Currently in Botswana many schools have a guidance teacher and/or volunteer for the position or, more likely, be chosen by the headmaster. Headmasters need to be sensitive to required merit and characteristics of a counsellor before selecting a candidate.

For the purpose of this report the term teacher-counsellor will be used to refer to the position in Botswana schools. The teacher counsellor is first and foremost a subject matter teacher. She/he teaches a subject area and then "fits counselling in." Very few teacher-counsellors are offered the opportunity for released time even though the Ministry has approved the concept. The problem was described by a Senior High School Headmaster as follows, " I would like to release the teacher from the class to do counselling but I have no one to take the position in the classroom." As a result most teacher-counsellors must do their counselling after regular class hours for which they get no pay. As one teacher counsellor put it "I do it (counselling) because I love it." For many of the teacher-counsellors the lack of pay for the role of counsellor is troublesome but the lack of extra pay did to seem to deter them from occupying the position. Some of the teacher-counsellors are paid as department heads or senior teachers but this is not true for all. The lack of release time and pay may not be as severe a problem as the lack of training, but it is certainly a significant issue.

Nearly all of the teacher-counsellors in Botswana are afforded no pre-service training in counselling. One Community Junior Secondary School teacher-counsellor, who had been working as a teacher-counsellor for nearly two years, stated, " I have had no training. I do not know what I am doing." She further indicated that she sees children with all types of social problems: child abuse, alcoholism, glue sniffing, pregnancy, boredom, realities of career opportunities which breed pessimism. She doesn't have the skills to help them, so she must refer the problem to the social worker or the headmaster. She further stated, " I would like to be trained so that I could help the students." It is apparent that the above mentioned teacher-counsellor's plight is not atypical. One must remember that there is also a developmental role for the teacher-counsellor that should be considered.

The problems of teenage pregnancy among Botswana youth has been well documented in two reports: the NIR report on *Teenage Pregnancies in Botswana* and the Intersectional Committee on Family Life Education report on *The Profile of Youth in Botswana* (1988). Both reports indicate that teenage pregnancy is a major social issue and one of the main reasons that young girls leave school, especially in rural areas.

The issue of teenage alcoholism has also been described in the 1988 report and study of *Alcoholism Use and Abuse in Botswana*. This study reports that there is a significant alcohol problem among the young. There are two other social issues that need to be mentioned here: boredom, especially in rural areas due to lack of recreational opportunities and much empty time; and pessimism about the future due to the significant lack of jobs and the high unemployment rate. Young people from 15 to 24 experience the highest unemployment rate of any cohort group (source: *Profile of Youth in Botswana*).

The role for teacher-counsellors and the status of training in Botswana can be divided neatly into pre-service and in-service. First an overview of the current pre-service capability will be discussed. The University of Botswana currently offers two courses in Guidance and Counselling. There is an introductory course that is a survey course on guidance and counselling and an advanced course which is continuation of the introductory course with the addition of counselling theories, skills practicing and role playing. There is currently discussion at the University of Botswana of adding additional course work in guidance and counselling.

MCE currently offers a course in Guidance and Counselling. It is a broad survey course which includes some skills development and role playing. MCE is considering the development of additional courses in guidance and counselling. Both UB and MCE's course work in counselling is taught by two expatriate contract employees whose contract will end within one year. The question is: who will fill this void? Currently there are two institutions of advanced study that offer limited course work in counselling. The teacher training colleges and the College of Education at Tonota offer no course work in counselling but have plans to offer guidance and counselling courses in their pre-service program. These institutions cannot launch a successful program due to the lack of qualified personnel to both design the curriculum and to do the instruction. This lack of qualified academic personnel is true at all levels of education. Currently there are few Botswana with advanced degrees in Guidance and Counselling: two are employed at the CD & E.

That there are only two professionals in the country with the qualifications to teach guidance counselling is definitely a concern. This does not necessarily mean that there are not others who can offer limited training in guidance and counselling but even that number is small.

There are many issues on developing a useful, comprehensive program of in-service training based on the needs of those in the field. The first issue focuses on the family of skills or clusters that are the basis for the model. One tends to be broad in identifying the groups of skills for teacher-counsellors. The following lists the typically accepted roles for full time counsellors. Under each role is a listing of functions that are usually associated with each role. Currently the pre-servicing training at UB and MCE gives cursory attention to these roles and functions. One must remember that pre-service training is limited to a very few in Botswana and the courses tend to be survey courses.

ROLE FUNCTION OF TEACHER-COUNSELLORS

These roles and functions should be contained in a comprehensive and systematic program of pre-service and in-service training. there may be some variability in using the following list. This variability will be based on the setting, e.g., Primary vs. Junior Community Secondary School or Senior Secondary School.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS

1. Program Development

- Develop objectives for the school guidance and counselling program.
- Plan several activities to achieve above objectives.
- Plan a specific evaluation method for each of the program activities.

2. Counselling

- Provide individual counselling services for personal problems and concerns.
- Provide group counselling services for personal problems and concerns.
- Provide group counselling services for educational problems.
- Provide group counselling services for vocational problems and concerns.
- Provide group counselling services for parents to help them understand their children.
- Provide information to students about the content of school courses to aid them in course selection.

3. Pupil Appraisal

- Keep a record of student test results and academic progress.
- Plan, carry out and interpret achievement, ability, and interest testing programs to assess students.
- Explain the results of testing to students and teachers.
- Assist in preparing students for exams, e.g., study skills.

4. Educational and Occupational Planning

- Provide students with information about educational opportunities.

- Conduct guidance activities in the classroom with the teacher, such as career development, self awareness, and decision making.
- Help teachers plan and implement teaching units where materials and concepts are related to guidance; that is, career development, self awareness, decision making.
- Provide testing to help students to make career choices.
- Coordinate school-career conferences.
- Help students relate education to careers.

5. Referral

- Refer student with special needs to the appropriate community agency.

6. Placement

- Assist graduated students and "dropouts" in getting jobs.
- Assist students in school to get part-time jobs.
- Conduct group guidance sessions for students in resume writing, completing job applications, job interviewing skills, and job application follow-up strategies.
- Assist students to make educational plans for the future, such as selecting a college career, training programs, etc.

7. Parent Help

- Counsel with parents on problems their children are encountering.
- Help resolve family conflicts around career and educational choices with parents and students.

8. Staff Consulting

- Consult with teachers in areas such as student motivation, student behavior, educational adjustment, classroom management, and teaching strategies.
- Consult with social worker or nurse on specific cases.
- Conduct guidance activities in classroom along with classroom teacher.

9. Research

- Conduct research studies on student characteristics (abilities, attitudes, interests, etc.) for various publics, i.e., teachers, administrators, the business community.
- Conduct research on new programs for implementation in the school system.
- Publish newsletter for students, parents and teachers.
- Initiate tracer and follow up studies.

10. Public Relations

- Keep public (parents, students and teachers) informed of available guidance programs.
- Plan and conduct orientation programs.
- Informal community agencies of students' needs and available guidance programs.
- Plan and coordinate parent teacher meetings pertaining to the guidance program.

Source: Ibrahim, Helms, and Thompson (1983) "Counsellor Role and Function: An appraisal by consumers and counsellors." *Personnel and Guidance Journal* 61, 597-601.

Each role and function is not equally important nor do they make the same demand on skills or time for the counsellor. The roles and functions range from clerical (for example, recording student test results and academic progress) to very sophisticated skills (providing individual counselling services for personal problems and concerns). It is critical then to identify the basic skills and the skills that occupy the highest priority for the teacher-counsellor role in Botswana. One way of approaching this issue is to determine which are basic skills that cut across many of the roles and functions. These skills that relate to the roles and functions may be organized in a hierarchical way from basic skills to advanced: for example, basic listening skills (eye contact, reflection of feeling and content) to providing direct services to children with personal problems (a skill). What is being suggested here is a step process from basic skills to more complex skills. In terms of delivering in-service training to the teacher-counsellors, the following model is suggested.

CORE SKILLS

The issue of core skills is an important one in training the teacher-counsellor to effectively use the roles and functions described earlier. In his book, *Counselling and Psychotherapy*, (1987) Ivey suggests a model of core skills that has appeal as a basis for training the teacher- counsellors. These core skills can be delivered through the application of a modular or mediated format using video and role playing as well as didactic approaches. The core skills that Ivey argues are the building blocks for constructing an effective counsellor are divided into two components. The first component is labeled 'basic attending skills'. this component included the following:

- Rapport building or establishing the relationship.

- Open questions or self-exploratory questions.
- Closed or information seeking questions.
- Encouragers: use of both verbal and non-verbal cues to facilitate client responses.
- Reflection of feeling: communicate from counsellor to client that the counsellor has heard the feelings the client has shared.
- Reflection of meaning or content: the client's content has been heard and received by the counsellor.
- Summarization: the ability of the counsellor to tie together in an organized manner the material the client has provided to the counsellor.

In terms of more advanced core skills, Ivey suggests the following to be considered:

- Feedback: the ability of the counsellor to provide the client with information on how she/he is perceived by the counsellor.
- Advice giving or the provision of information to the client about a specific issue.
- Self-disclosure: the counsellor shares some personal experiences from the counsellor's past.
- Confrontation to challenge the client's view or philosophy.

There are four other core skills that will be suggested at this juncture. These four skills added to the rest would provide the necessary skill base for practicing counsellors. These four application skills are:

- Decision Making: the skill of problem identification, generation of alternates, weighing values, and consequences of each alternative.
- Time Management: the skill of organizing one's day effectively.
- Information Management and Organization: the skill of collecting, organizing and disseminating information for the consumption of the client.
- Development of Guidance Program.

These skills that have been describe are behavioral and are amenable to being taught through a workshop format. These skills have been organized in a hierarchical way and should be taught in the order presented in this section. It is suggested that AID provide a consultant for the development and delivery of those skills.

THE MODEL

The model is that the guidance unit within the CD&E take the lead in developing training protocols that can be used at the Regional Education Centers. These materials under the leadership of the Guidance Unit could be developed at UB and MCE. What is suggested is a cooperative approach to maximize very limited resources. The argument for using UB and MCE is that they are the repository for much of the guidance expertise along with the Guidance Unit in Botswana. It is further suggested that lecturers from UB and MCE participate in the in-service training along with the Guidance Unit of the teacher counsellors.

Once the materials are developed, a core group of teacher counsellors could be selected to develop the skills that are to be taught to other teacher counsellors in the field. This core group would also develop skills in conducting successful workshops.

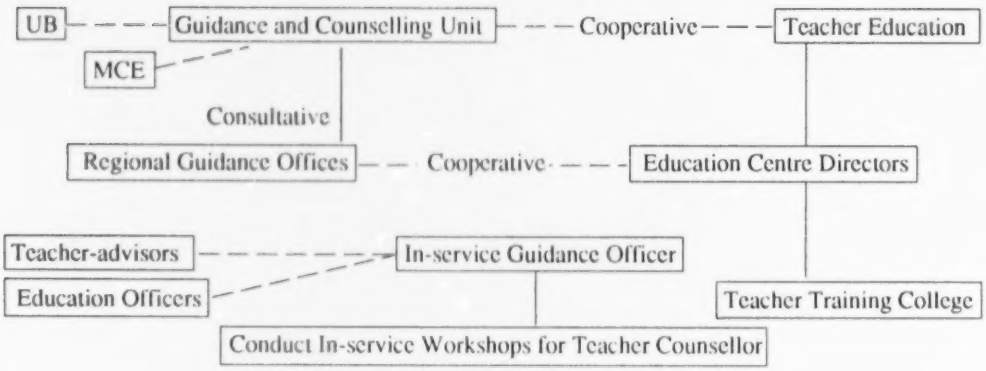
This training could be done jointly by the Guidance Unit, MCE and UB. These core teachers would be called Inservice Guidance Officers. They would be given the responsibility under the direction of a Regional Guidance Officer to conduct workshops resulting in a multiplier effect. The multiplier effect will be successful if the Regional Guidance Officer (RGO) has the intensive training and qualifications outlined. The RGO must be given intensive training in the role and function, as well as the core skills. This training could take place abroad or at UB toward receiving a B.Ed. degree or a counselling equivalent.

The In-service Guidance Officer would be given release time similar to the teacher-advisors and eventually become full time trainers under the direction of the Regional Guidance Officer. It is critical that the teacher-advisor and the RGOs work closely together and, in fact, work in tandem to improve the quality of education. The use of the Education Centers would be coordinated with the Office of Teacher Education to make the delivery of services smooth. If a core of trainers is to be developed, it is vital that those who are chosen be among the best and are so recognized by their peers and headmasters and that they be given release time.

It is also critical that the position as teacher-counsellor trainer be gazetted so that there may be official recognition, along with pay, for their position. Cooperation must exist between the Office of Teacher Education, UTS, Secondary Education and Guidance and Counselling Unit for this model to work. The Guidance and Counselling Reference Committee could be the structure for the various cooperating agencies.

This model depicts the process of in-service training that is recommended and it includes a close advisory relationship with the Department of Teacher Education, UB and MCE. The Regional Guidance Officers' role is critical for they select the core teachers and provide the training with technical assistance consultation from the Guidance and Counselling Unit of CD & E.

IN-SERVICE MODEL FOR CORE TEACHER COUNSELLORS



CAPACITY OF THE GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING UNIT

Currently, the capacity of the guidance and counselling unit is severely strained. There is one vacancy in a unit whose full strength is four. The current vacancy should be filled as soon as possible. The problem will be to find someone with the skills and qualifications. Another staff member will be leaving for two years of further education. Unless his position is filled, it will handicap the organization's capabilities to meet its goals.

A phased development is recommended that would begin with the selection and training of four Regional Guidance Officers. Secondly, In-service Guidance Officers who would train and provide technical assistance for teacher-counsellors in the schools must be selected and trained. The problem would be to identify individuals with the appropriate knowledge and background to assume the position of Regional Guidance Officer. Those who occupy the position of Regional Guidance Officer are *absolutely critical* to the success of the program. The Regional Guidance Officer must be given support by the CD & E in terms of materials and resources to be able to successfully execute the business of staff development. In many ways the model proposed here is similar to the proposal by Mapp-Robinson, 1987. There is strong suggested support for slow and phased development of the staff development model. The process must go slow to allow for the selection and training of those who are charged with the role of in-service training. The success of the program is dependent on the development of a highly skilled cadre of In-service Guidance Officers to provide the training.

ADMINISTRATIVE LOCATION OF COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE UNIT

Often during consultancies, issues emerge that were not part of the original work plan and this occurred during this consultancy. The question was raised as to whether or not the mission of the Guidance and Counselling Unit would be best served by remaining in the CD & E or would it be best served by moving it to the Department of Teacher Education. The argument for remaining in the CD & E has some strength in that the Guidance and Counselling Unit does produce curriculum materials, but the bulk of these materials are for teacher training, not for pupil use. The training of teachers, both pre- and in-service, appears to fast becoming the major thrust of the unit and if that is so it may be best located in the Department that has the responsibility for teacher training. The Department of Teacher Education has within its jurisdiction the CD & E, TTCs, Education Centers and aspects of UB. The cooperation of those units is crucial in terms of implementing the recommendations featured in this report. It is therefore recommended that the Guidance and Counselling Unit be transferred to the Department of Teacher Education.

CAREER UNIT

The development of a career information system is critical to a successful guidance program. Certainly the development of such a system has implications for in-service training of teacher-counsellors. For when the appropriate system is put into place teacher-counsellors will need training in how best to deliver career information. It may seem obvious but the core of a good career information system is accurate, current and clear information. The information must reflect both local and national information on careers. The information must focus both on current

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and future manpower needs as well as the skills and education needed for entering the workforce. The information must be made available in two forms for use by the counsellor. This might include technical information about careers in Botswana and in their region for the students.

It is suggested that the Guidance and Counselling Unit establish Careers Information Officers. It would be the Regional Guidance Officers responsibility to collect information for both public and private sectors of the economy. This information would be catalogued and disseminated for use by both teacher-counsellors and students. It would be necessary for this information to be updated on at least a quarterly basis. In a rapidly changing market place information changes the most rapidly and, as was pointed out earlier, it is critical that information be accurate.

The career information would be disseminated by the Career information Officer through the Regional Guidance Officer to provide information about career opportunities and issues in their region to the Career Information Officers. Workshops would be held at the Education Center in each region for the teacher-counsellor on the development of career materials for use by the students at the individual schools.

The counsellor would be responsible for establishing a career information facility within the existing structure at the school, e.g., counsellor office, library, individual classroom, wherever it is most feasible and accessible to students. The teacher-counsellor would also have additional training in career counselling on either a one-to-one or group basis or in a formal classroom. So when career issues come up the teacher-counsellor will be prepared and able to be useful to the student population of each school.

In order for the Career information System to operate effectively, it must have access to current and accurate information. A professional must be appointed at CD & E to administer the program to receive and distribute the information to each of four regions. This process must be interactive with information flowing from each region to the Guidance and Counselling Unit and back to the regions. This all must be done in a timely and expedious manner.

CAREER LADDER

With the development of two new professional tracks, teacher-counsellors and teacher-advisors, it is an auspicious time to consider a career ladder. Both these posts share a service direction - not a curriculum direction- and very specialized training and experience. A career ladder system is indeed critical for recognition and incentive for those who will be taking on additional responsibilities associated with teacher-counsellor and teacher-advisor positions.

For the sake of this report, the career ladder will be developed for teacher-counsellors. A similar model could be developed for the teacher-advisors. The entry level for a teacher-counsellor would be at least three years of teaching experience and demonstrated mastery of the basic core skills.

The next rung on the career ladder, Service Teacher Counsellor, would be obtained after six years of experience and demonstrated mastery of core skills at the basic and advanced levels and the equivalent of a diploma or a diploma itself.

The third rung, Master Teacher Counsellor, would require nine years of experience, six of which must be as a teacher-counsellor and a B.Ed. or its equivalent. There would be appropriate pay adjustments to accompany each promotion.

This movement up the career ladder is based on achieving certain levels of skill in counselling and a certain level of educational attainment, preferably in counselling. Attainment could also be in other educational fields unit there are full-fledged programs in counselling at either the College of Education or the University of Botswana. Finally, these positions must be gazetted and achieve official recognition for this scheme to be successful.

It is critical that career ladder be installed that provides an incentive and reward for successful professionals in all facets of employment in the Ministry of Education. The need for advancement, recognition and professional growth is critical for a viable cadre of professionals to be effective. The career ladder should be based on the ability to meet certain specific educational and performance criterion as well as seniority to be able to move up the steps of the career ladder. It is essential to begin to work on this issue across all units within the Ministry of Education, not only the Guidance and Counselling Unit. It is suggested that the recommendations be implemented slowly, for each of the recommendations will require highly trained professionals in guidance and counselling. These professionals for the most part don't currently exist in Botswana. There are certainly needs for structural changes but the changes will be frustrating without appropriate staff to implement the suggested process.

FINAL THOUGHT

If the suggestions that are included in this report are to be implemented there has to be coordination at the Ministers' level for the recommendations cut across Departmental lines within the Ministry of Education. Secondly, there needs to be a willingness to embrace the manpower capability of the Guidance and Counselling Unit if it is going to be able to carry out the recommendations of this consultancy.

Action Plan

September, 1990 – August, 1993

1. Accept Consultant's Report
2. Reconstitute Reference Committee.
3. Develop agreements with UB, MCE and Guidance Unit to develop and deliver training materials.
4. Develop job description, select and train career Information Officer(s).
5. Transfer the Guidance and Counselling Unit to the Department of Teacher Education.
6. Develop training materials for basic and advanced core skills.
7. Gazette positions.
8. Institutionalize career ladder.
9. Develop job description for Regional Guidance Officers.
10. Select Regional Guidance Officers and provide necessary training.
11. Develop job description, select and train In-Service Guidance Officers.
12. In-Service Guidance Officers conduct workshops on Core skills, both basic and advanced.
13. Develop career information dissemination and retrieval network.
14. Evaluate scheme and refine.

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